

Council Policy 2.3

Councillor Training and Continuing Professional Development

Interrelated Documents

Council Policy 6.2 – Reimbursement of Expenses for Conferences, Seminars and Other Events

Council Policy 6.3 – Attendance at Events

Strategic Plan Objective

3.3 To provide responsible and accountable governance and management of the EMRC

Purpose

This policy describes the EMRC's approach to enable Councillors to meet their statutory obligations in relation to Councillor training and gives effect to the requirement to adopt a continuing professional development policy.

Part 5, Division 10 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) describes provisions related to the universal training of Councillors:

- under section 5.126 of the Act, each Councillor must complete training in accordance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*;
- under section 5.127 of the Act, the CEO must publish a report on the local government's website within one (1) month of the end of the financial year detailing the training completed by Councillors;
- under section 5.128 of the Act, a local government must prepare and adopt a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of councillors.

Scope

This Policy applies to all elected members appointed to the EMRC.

Legislation

- Part 5, Division 10 of the *Local Government Act 1995*
- Part 10 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*
- Under section 5.128 of the *Local Government Act 1995* adoption and modification of this policy requires an Absolute Majority decision by Council.

Policy Statement

Introduction

Councillors have a unique and challenging role performing their functions under the Act. The EMRC recognises the value of training and continuing professional development to build and supplement Councillor skills and experience.

Training can take several forms including formal qualifications, short-courses, seminars and conferences.

Training paid for in accordance with this policy must have benefit to the EMRC, the relevant member council and the community. Training must relate to the professional development of Councillors in their role as a Councillor. Examples of organisations that provide training relating to the professional development of Councillors, includes, but is not restricted to:

- Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)
- Australian Local Government Association
- Australian Institute of Management
- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Institute of Public Administration Australia.

Training related to public sector management leadership; town planning; strategic planning; financial management; corporate governance; risk management; conflict resolution; and emergency management is also considered to be relevant.

In considering training, Councillors should complete training, where possible, through a Registered Training Organisation.

Attendance and/or participation at conferences is also considered to be training where value to the EMRC, the relevant member council and community can be demonstrated.

Councillors should note that all training undertaken, including conferences paid for entirely or partially by the EMRC and/or the respective member council will be published on the EMRC's website in accordance with section 5.127 of the Act.

Prescribed Training Requirements

The *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* requires Councillors to complete a 'Council Member Essentials' course consisting of five modules. Certain exemptions, specified in the Regulations, apply.

Training must be completed by all Councillors following their election within 12 months of taking office and is valid for five years. The Regulations require that the course is completed through North Metropolitan TAFE, South Metropolitan TAFE, or WALGA.

Non-compliance with the requirement to complete training is an offence under the Act punishable by a fine not exceeding \$5,000.

Councillors have a responsibility to complete training in accordance with the legislation.

Following each ordinary election, Councillors will be provided with information on training options from the approved training providers. Councillors will be able to select a training option to meet their learning style and availability.

Continuing Professional Development

The EMRC is committed to supporting Continuing Professional Development of Councillors to the benefit of the EMRC, its member councils and the community.

Continuing professional development can include training and attendance at conferences in accordance with this policy.

Training that exceeds the allocated budget amount may be approved by resolution of Council.

Funding

The policy, training and training funding requirements of all EMRC Councillors, as required under the Act, are to be fulfilled by the training undertaken through their respective member councils.

Each Councillor is also allotted an annual training allocation in the EMRC's annual budget. The training allocation is for a financial year and expires at the end of the financial year.

As the expenditure of funds from the EMRC's budget can only be authorised by Council, Councillors must obtain the necessary approvals set in this policy prior to making any financial or other commitments on behalf of the EMRC.

Unless otherwise resolved by the Council:

- Councillors are to use their annual training funding allocation for all training and continuing professional development, except for training that they are required to complete under section 5.126 of the Act;
- Councillors are not permitted to nominate for attendance at a training course or conference paid for by the EMRC three (3) months prior to their term of office expiring;
- Councillors who do not complete training paid by the EMRC will be required to repay the EMRC for the training and associated costs; and
- Any amendments or cancellations to bookings resulting from a change in Councillors' personal circumstances shall be at the Councillor's own cost. Any change or cancellation resulting from the EMRC's operations shall be communicated to Councillors and paid for by the EMRC.

Reporting on Training

In accordance with section 5.127 of the Act, the EMRC will publish a report on the EMRC's website within one (1) month of the end of the financial year detailing the training completed by Councillors.

In order to complete the register, Councillors shall, following completion of the training, provide evidence of completion of the training to the EMRC. Councillors will be asked to confirm their completion or attendance as applicable prior to the publication of the register.

The register will state:

- Councillor name;
- Each training course or module completed;
- The cost of training and any associated travel and accommodation paid for by the EMRC; and
- The training provider or conference name.

For reporting purposes, the costs of training completed as a group will be apportioned to each Councillor that was registered to attend.

Councillors are encouraged to share learnings and insights from training, including conferences with Council.

- Part 5, Division 10 of the *Local Government Act 1995*
- Part 10 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*
- Under section 5.128 of the *Local Government Act 1995* adoption and modification of this policy requires an Absolute Majority decision by Council.



Financial Considerations

An amount will be provided in the annual budget to meet estimated costs associated with continuing professional development by Councillors.

Adopted/Reviewed

24 February 2022

Next Review

Following the Ordinary Elections in 2023

Responsible Unit

Business Support Team